



Dragons

Grades 3 - 5

*This lesson is written to be completed independently
and is recommended for children in grades 3-5.*

In this Lesson Plan, students will learn about dragons and their cultural importance by listening to and reading books, exploring databases, inventing, and more! This Lesson can be simplified or made more complicated as desired.

This lesson contains activities that have been connected to Missouri Learning Standards using the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guidelines. Although these lessons have been connected to a state learning standard, they are not intended to replace the educational curriculum provided through public, private, or at-home learning.

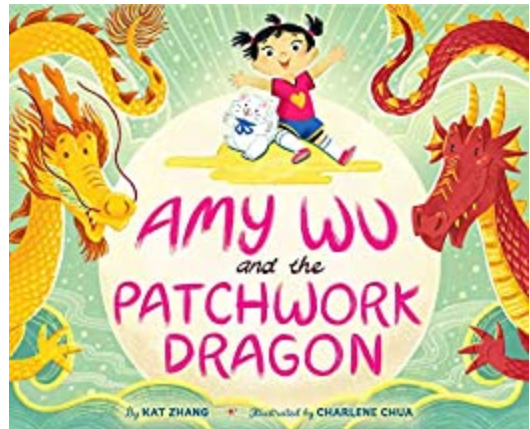
To access videos and databases, click on the hyperlinked text in the lesson plan. An active Christian County Library card is necessary to access select activities. For help, email youthservices@christiancountylibrary.org or call your local community branch.

1. Introduction to the Lesson

- a. Print out the documents and handouts to have ready for the lesson and gather any needed supplies.
- b. Dragons may be creatures of fantasy, but stories about them can be found all around the world, from Europe to Asia and even America! Dragons look different depending on each culture. Asian dragons are long serpent-like creatures that fly with magic, while European and Western dragons breathe fire and fly on huge wings. There is even a dragon from the ancient city of Babylon with a scaly body, a serpent's head, a viper's horns, the front feet of a feline, the hind feet of a bird, and a scorpion's tail!
 - i. SDEE Standard: Listen for a purpose 1.A.b; Writing 2.B.a.b.c.; Reading 1.A.b.

2. Listen and Write

- a. Listen to a library staff member read [*Amy Wu and the Patchwork Dragon*](#) by Kat Zhang
 - i. Writing Prompt: Why did Amy change her dragon? What makes the Eastern dragon different from the Western one? What parts from each dragon did Amy use? Would you have changed your dragon? Why or why not?
 - ii. DESE Standard: Speaking/Listening 1.A.b; Reading 1.C.b.; 3.A. c.; Writing 2.B.a.b.c.



3. Dragons and Culture

- a. Dragons are found everywhere throughout history. Almost every major culture has stories about them. Some from cultures on opposite sides of the globe. So how did dragons end up so important to us? And why do stories of them come up so often in history even though we have never seen a real one?

- i. Discussion: Think about these questions before reading ahead. Write down what you think the answers are to the questions above on Handout A.



- b. To answer those questions we need to think about early man and what was dangerous to them. Scientists who study ancient cultures suggest that the idea of dragons came from an evolutionary fear of snakes and other dangerous reptiles. Myths and legends usually come from some truth. Reptiles used to be something very frightening to and misunderstood by man, so they crafted stories and monsters based off of this fear. This may be why dragons come up so much in cultural myths.

- i. Discussion: Now that you know why dragons are so popular in culture, think about what modern day animal or thing could become a myth. Is it an animal, or maybe a modern creation like a phone?
- ii. DESE Standard: Reading 3.C.e.; Speaking/Listening 1.A.b., 3.A.c ; Reading 1.A.a

4. Chinese Dragons

- a. Images and mythologies of dragons from China are very different from the popular western dragon often seen in fantasy television shows in the United States.

Chinese dragons were seen

as merciful beings who lived around water or in clouds and were



thought to bring the life-giving rain needed for crops. Chinese dragons were said to have the horns of a deer, the forehead of a camel, the neck of a snake, the scales of a carp, the claws of an eagle, and the ears of an ox. The Chinese dragon was believed to be extraordinarily powerful, and when it flew, it was usually accompanied by lightning and thunder.

- i. Discussion: Before reading ahead think about the reasons these dragons are so different from the western idea of dragons. Write down your answer, then after reading more see if you were right.
- b. Some historians believe that these dragons were seen this way because of the link with rainbows, and a “serpent of the sky” which was seen after rain or around waterfalls.
 - i. Discussion: Now that you have an idea of why these dragons were so different. Why do you think western dragons were not seen the same way as eastern dragons?
 - ii. DESE Standard: Speaking/Listening 1.A.b; Reading 1.A.a

5. Greek Dragons

- a. Dragons from western mythology are far different than those from eastern. Rarely are they good, and many times heroes fight them to gain fame for their actions. One of the most famous Greek dragons is Landon. The name may not seem very fearsome, but



according to the myth Landon was a serpent-like dragon who was said to have as many as one hundred heads and was charged with guarding the goddess Hera’s golden apples. There are many versions of this story and how this dragon was defeated. One of the most popular ones is that Hercules persuaded Atlas, the Titan who held the world on his back to retrieve that apple while he held the world in Atlas’s place. Though, because Hercules had to ask for help, it did not count as completed in his twelve trials he was tasked with completing.

- i. Discussion: Do you think Hercules should have asked for help? What would you have done?

- ii. Research and discussion: Using the [Explora Middle School](#) database on the Christian County Library's website, find a myth from another culture featuring dragons. *(If you don't have access to the internet, check out a book about dragons from your library to do your research instead.)* How does it compare to the myth above? Write down your answers on the Handout B provided below.
- iii. DESE Standard: Art VA.Cr.1.A.k; Writing 2.B.c; Reading 1.C.a

6. Imagine It!

- a. Now that you know about dragons from two different cultures, create a dragon from your culture! What does it look like? Does it have any special powers? What makes your dragon unique to your culture? After you have decided all this, create a unique piece of art depicting your imaginary dragon. Use paint, pencils, paper or whatever you want!
 - i. DESE Standard: Art VA.Cr.1.A.k



7. Dragon Mix-up

- a. Ancient people might have stumbled upon what they believed to be real-life monsters. Finding fossilized dinosaur bones might have inspired quite a few of the dragon myths today!
- b. Write it: Imagine you are an ancient person and you have just found the skeleton in the image to the right of a stegosaurus. What would your first reaction be? Do you tell your ancient friends about it? Write your answers down on Handout C.
 - i. DESE Standard: Speaking/Listening 1.A.b.



8. Dragon STEAM Activity

- a. Many of the dragons we are familiar with are huge, fire-breathing terrors, but how do they breath their fire? In this experiment on handout E you will create your own foam spitting dragon, and observe how reactions occur. Our dragon will use baking soda and vinegar to spit foam, think about what a dragon would use to breathe fire. Would they use gas? Or some kind of chemical reaction like the foam dragon?
- b. Using Handout E, follow the instructions to create your own indoor safe dragon.
 - i. DESE Standard: Geometry and Measurement: Measure or estimate length, liquid volume, and weight of objects.

9. Cooking Activity

- a. Dragons are seen as great and powerful creatures, so of course people would make food based on them! In China there is a food called dragon's beard candy, which is a sugary mix pulled again and again into fine threads and wrapped around crushed peanuts. It was enjoyed by emperors and has become a popular candy today in China, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Read all about the popular candy [here](#).
- b. You can make a much easier dragon recipe on your own with half of a pear by following the instructions on handout D below, or if you are up for a challenge you can learn how to make dragon's beard candy by accessing the [A-Z World Food](#) database.



10. Craft It!

- a. Dragons come in all shapes and sizes, now you can make your own “flying” dragon. Using yarn and a paper tube create a unique dragon, make it any color, shape, or size you want! After you finish this craft with the instructions on handout F think about questions below.
 - i. Discussion: Think about why the dragon “flies”. What effect does gravity have on the dragon? How does the yarn move the dragon? Change the angle you pull the yarn, does it change how the dragon moves?
 - ii. DESE Standard: Science 4.PSA.1

11. Real-Life Dragons!

- a. Did you know that dragons are real? They may not breathe fire or fly, but they are huge beasts! Komodo dragons were only discovered around a hundred years ago and only live on islands surrounding Indonesia. Read about these real-life dragons, on the [National Geographic Kids](#) website. Then answer the questions below on the handout provided.
 - i. How big can Komodo Dragons grow to be?
 - ii. What do Komodo Dragons eat?
 - iii. Are they venomous?
 - iv. How many eggs do Komodo Dragons lay?
 - v. Do you think there are other, even bigger reptiles we still haven’t discovered, just like the komodo dragon?
 - vi. DESE Standard: Writing 2.B.a.b.c.; Reading 3.A.c



➤ Explore more! Here are some optional links for more learning and fun!

- [The Dragon in Ancient China](#)
- [Where Did Dragons Come From?](#)

- [Dragon Facts from Soft Schools](#)

➤ **Learning Standard**

b. The learning standards attached to each activity can be found at the following links:

- i. [Missouri Learning Standards/Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education \(DESE\)](#)

Write Down Your Answers Here:

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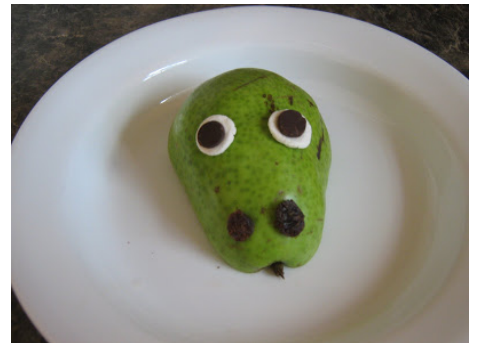
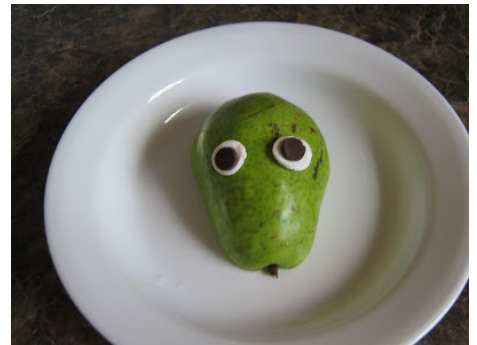
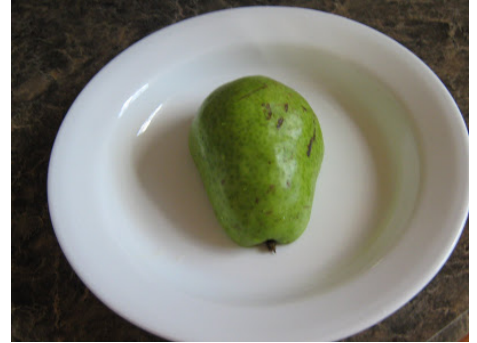
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Pear Dragon Snack Activity

Supplies:

- Pear
- Chocolate chips
- Marshmallows
- Raisins
- Cashews

1. Have and remove the core of a pear.
2. Stick chocolate chip pupils on the middle of a small piece of squished marshmallow and add them as eyes.
3. Add raisin nostrils.
4. Cut out small wedges and add cashew horns.



Foaming Dragon Experiment

Supplies needed:

- Green (or other color if you choose) Foam Craft Sheets or cardstock.
- Tape
- Googly Eyes
- Plastic wide-mouth bottle
- Vinegar
- Dishwashing liquid
- Liquid Food Dye
- Baking Soda

1. First you need to make the dragon. Draw the dragon's tail on one of the foam sheets and cut it out. Also draw and cut out two arms and two legs from a foam sheet.
2. Tape tail and arms and legs onto the bottle. Glue or tape on two googly eyes so it looks as though the dragon is looking up. Now you are ready for the experiment!
3. Fill the bottle half way full of vinegar and add a squirt of dishwashing liquid and a drop or two of food coloring. (You can use whatever color you want and change it up each time you do it.) Gently mix the contents of the bottle and place in the middle of a large cookie sheet or other tray. (It will be messy so make sure it is contained in some way!)
4. Add a teaspoon or more of baking soda to the bottle (adding a lot will make the dragon foam quite a bit like the photo to the right) and watch the dragon foam at the mouth.



So what's happening? When you mix vinegar and baking soda it makes carbon dioxide. This forms bubbles in the vinegar and causes it to expand. The gas bubbles react with the dish soap to make a foam. The bubbles make the mixture expand and rise causing the dragon to foam at the mouth.

Flying Dragon Craft

- empty cardboard roll (4-6 inches long)
- construction paper
- yarn
- markers
- wiggly eyes
- scissors
- craft glue



1. Measure the length of your cardboard tube and cut a strip of construction paper that wide so it will cover the tube. Glue this around the tube. You could also use clear tape to hold it in place.
2. Fold a piece of construction paper in half and draw a wing shape on the paper, with the folded edge being where the wing would meet the dragon's body. Cut out the wing shape so that when you unfold it, you have 2 wings that are connected.
3. Glue the wings to the cardboard tube.
4. Use construction paper to create a tail and a head for the dragon.
5. Attach the wiggly eyes to the head and use markers to complete the dragon's face.
6. Glue the tail and head to the cardboard tube. Let the glue dry completely before doing the next part.
7. Cut 4-5 feet of yarn and hang it over a doorknob or from a hook so an equal amount hangs on both sides.
8. Thread the loose ends of the yarn through the top of the tube so they stick out the bottom.
9. To make the dragon fly, hold the two ends of the yarn, one in each hand, and pull your hands apart to separate the yarn.



A green, cartoonish creature with a long pink tongue sticking out. It has yellow eyes and a yellow stripe on its side. The creature is sitting and looking towards the right.

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